

Health *counts!*

Uniform Medical Plan's Rewards Program for Good Health Habits

Welcome to the Fifth Issue of Health Counts!

Learn how you can earn \$30 when you take the Health Counts e-Health Survey, plus get interesting news and information on good health habits and behaviors.



Earn Rewards for Healthy Choices

Are you making your health count yet? It's easy with UMP's online health survey! You get 40 points just for taking the survey, and you can earn additional points based on your answers. After you complete the survey, click on "Health Counts Scorecard" in the left column to see your total number of points. If your survey results total 100, we'll send you \$30. If you don't make 100 points, you can return to the scorecard anytime during the year to earn more points for healthy behavior changes.

To get started, click on the Health Counts tab on the UMP home page at www.ump.hca.gov.

Did You Know?



All UMP enrollees, including spouses and children over 18, can earn the \$30 rebate too!

Stress Busters *5 Easy Ways to Loosen Up*

Quick fixes rarely provide long-term solutions but when it comes to stress, even a few simple steps can produce noticeable results in a few minutes.

Relaxation techniques help pause the body's response to stress and the production of harmful stress hormones that can weaken your immune system. When you release tension, you also lower your heart rate, reduce your blood pressure, and boost circulation.

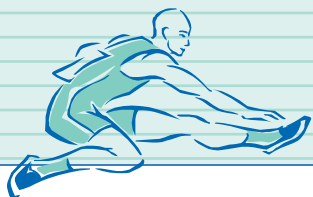
Here are a few techniques to try the next time you feel the pressure build:

- Lift shoulders up to your ears, then lower slowly.
- Stretch out fingers in a fan, release, then shake them vigorously for 10 seconds.
- Stretch your mouth wide to relax facial muscles.
- Stand up and stretch your arms out to the sides.
- Breathe in slowly and deeply. Hold for a few seconds, then release slowly. Try keeping that rhythm as you continue your activities.

These techniques work by shifting attention from the source of your stress to your own body. Exercise is another great method for soothing frazzled nerves. Endorphins released during moderate and vigorous exercise produce a calming effect that helps you feel better. If you're managing chronic stress, you may need to take more aggressive action. For suggestions, visit the American Institute of Stress Web site at www.stress.org.

If a medical condition keeps you from earning the rebate, call UMP at 1-800-762-6004, and we'll help you find another way to qualify.





Asthma and Exercise

If asthma keeps you from exercising, UMP can help. We offer free phone-based health coaching to help you get your asthma under control. An asthma health coach makes sure you have the right treatment plan for your condition, supplies such as an inhaler, spacer, and peak flow meter to monitor your lung function, and a logbook to keep track of asthmatic episodes. For more information, contact Uniform Medical Plan's care management department at 1-888-759-4855 and press option 8. The asthma care management program is open to all UMP enrollees.

Make the Most of Every Workout

The harder you exercise, the greater the benefits. But how do you know you're working hard enough?

The Centers for Disease Control offers some suggestions to help figure it out. If, for example, you're exercising at moderate intensity, you should be able to hold a conversation at the same time. With vigorous exercise, you'd probably be too winded or out of breath.

Your heartbeat also tells you how hard you're working. For moderate activity, your heart rate should be 50–70 percent of your maximum. To calculate your maximum heart rate, subtract your age from 220. Vigorous exercise requires 70–85 percent of the maximum heart rate. To calculate your heart rate, count the number of beats for 15 seconds, then multiply by four.

The math would look like this for a 50-year-old:

$$220 - 50 = 170 \text{ bpm (maximum heart rate)}$$

$$170 \times 0.70 = 119 \text{ bpm (exercising at 70 percent intensity)}$$

For a look at real-world examples, consider that pushing a power mower is considered moderate exercise, but using a nonmotorized version classifies as vigorous. Kayaking on a calm lake would put you in the moderate range, but doing it in whitewater rapids ranks as high intensity. And if you need an incentive to push yourself to a higher intensity workout, remember that you'll need to spend less time doing vigorous activities than you do exercising moderately for the same benefits to your health.

Every Bit Counts!	Health Counts Points
Points for Exercising (for at least 6 weeks)	
For 20 minutes/5 times per week, or 30 minutes/3 times per week	10
For 30 minutes/5 times per week, or 40 minutes/3 times per week	20
For 40 minutes/5 times per week	30

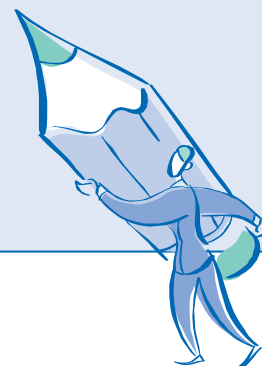
Tell Us Your Health Counts Story

"I didn't realize I had so many risks."

"It is nice to know how well I am taking care of myself."

"I was surprised and pleased to find out I can get a free flu shot." (does not apply to Medicare retirees)

What did you gain from participating in Health Counts and taking the e-Health Survey? Write and let us know by going to "Share your story" on the Health Counts home page (www.ump.hca.wa.gov/healthcounts). Your story could inspire others to take charge of their health.



Governor Launches New State Wellness Program

Governor Gregoire has given state employees a central role in her goal to make all Washingtonians healthier.



The program, called Washington Wellness, promotes health and disease prevention through a network of wellness coordinators recruited from state agencies. Wellness coordinators will encourage employees to take a health risk assessment (HRA), one of Governor Gregoire's main objectives.

All employees enrolled in a health plan provided by the Public Employees Benefits Board can take an HRA (UMP's version is the e-Health Survey). You can find the HRAs on the Web sites of Uniform Medical Plan, Group Health and Kaiser Permanente. Employees covered by Regence Classic and Community Health Plan Classic can access the HRA through the Washington Wellness Web site.

By focusing on employees, Gregoire has said she hopes Washington Wellness

creates a model for the rest of the state to emulate. "In so doing, we not only improve the health of state employees and retirees themselves, but also enhance their ability to serve state citizens," said Governor Gregoire in her official announcement about the program. Washington Wellness is funded by a grant from the National Governors Association.

Health surveys help achieve the goal of healthier citizens by boosting health literacy, showing how lifestyle can lower the risk of disease, providing handy reminders of important preventive exams, and rating diet and exercise habits. "Your genetic history cannot be changed, but you can reduce your health risks so you can be your best at work and at home," says Scott Pritchard, program director of Washington Wellness.

For more information about Washington Wellness, visit www.wellness.wa.gov.



Do It at Work

Don't have enough free time to do the e-Health Survey? Now you can do the survey at work. In line with her initiative to improve the health of Washingtonians, Governor Gregoire has encouraged all state agencies to allow employees to complete the survey during regular work hours. To take the survey, go to www.ump.hca.wa.gov/healthcounts.

Screening Success Mammograms Help Cut Breast Cancer Deaths

More women are surviving breast cancer, and researchers say mammograms get as much of the credit as improved chemotherapy treatments. From 1990 to 2000, deaths caused by breast cancer dropped by almost 20 percent.



Keep track of your annual mammograms and other preventive screenings with your UMP online medical account. To set up an account, visit www.ump.hca.wa.gov. Getting your annual mammogram also counts toward earning your \$30 Health Counts rebate.

Every Bit Counts!	Health Counts Points
Mammogram exam every year for women over 40	5

Save Time Taking the Survey

You can take the Health Counts e-Health Survey in less time when you have the following information about yourself handy:

- Weight
- Blood pressure
- Total cholesterol
- Level of LDL (low-density lipoprotein or "bad" cholesterol)

Every Bit Counts!	Health Counts Points
Taking the e-Health Survey	40

Earn \$30 in 2007 When You Participate in Health Counts

Read inside for details!

When you earn 100 points with
Health Counts, we'll send you \$30!
You get points for:

- Taking the e-Health Survey
- Eating fruits and vegetables
- Getting preventive care
- Exercising regularly

Health Counts

www.ump.hca.wa.gov/healthcounts

on the web



**Uniform
Medical Plan**
Your health. Your plan. Your choice.

Here's your latest issue of

Healthcounts!

Inside

- Stress-Busting Tips
- Introducing Washington Wellness
- Gov. Gregoire OKs Taking the Health Counts Survey at Work



**Uniform
Medical Plan**

Your health. Your plan. Your choice.



Washington State Health Care Authority
P.O. Box 91118 • Seattle, WA 98111

HCA 54-906 (5/07)